

customary in all cities.¹ The old idea had been that churches were common public property, a universal rendezvous for every common interest. Dedications of churches and feasts of martyrs had been general merrymakings. D'Ancona collects dicta of councils and popes condemning dramatic actions in churches, and the singing of lewd songs and dancing by women.² The language used implies that the songs, gestures, acts, and suggestions connected with the performances in the churches were lewd and indecent. The populace, while using the license, well perceived its incongruity and impropriety, and this stimulated the satire, which was so strong a feature of the late Middle Ages and which produced the farce. The mysteries and moralities for a time gave entertainment, but they became tedious. The farce was at first "stuffing," put in to break up the dullness by fun making of some kind and to give spice to the entertainment, just as meats *TNVtt farcies* to give them more savor. It grew until it surpassed and superseded the sober drama. The populace did not want more preaching and instruction, but fun and frolic, relief from

labor, thought, and care. The take-off, caricature, burlesque, parody, discerns and sets forth the truth against current humbug, and the pretenses of the successful classes. The fool comes into prominence again, not by inheritance but by rational utility. The fifteenth century offered him plenty of material. As a fool he escaped responsibility. This role, — that of the *badin* in France, the *gracioso* in Spain, *arlequino* in Italy, *Hans-wurst* in Germany, — becomes fixed like the buffoon (*maccus*) in the classical comedy. In France, from the beginning of the fourteenth century, the *basochiens* were young clerks and advocates who were studying law and who made fun of law proceedings. They met with only limited toleration. Their satire was not relished by the legal great men. In the fourteenth century they took up moralities overweighted with allegory but broken up by farces. In the fifteenth century the *Enfans sans Souci* were another variety of *com/diens*. Their emblem was the cap with two horns or ass's ears.³ The life of St. Louis was

¹ D'Ancona, *Origins del Teatro in Italia* ^ I, 344.

³ *Ibid.* I, 47.

³ Lenient, *La Satire en France au M. A.*, 324-340.